



CASE STUDY – NONPROFIT AWARENESS CAMPAIGN ASHLEY COOPER STORMWATER EDUCATION CONSORTIUM

OVERVIEW

The drainage from the Ashley and Cooper Rivers flows into Charleston Harbor and the Atlantic Ocean. The [Ashley Cooper Stormwater Education Consortium](#) (Ashley Cooper) believes ‘everyone lives downstream.’ The group brings communities, universities, and other nonprofits together to reduce runoff and preserve their water supply. An offshoot of [Clemson University’s Carolina Clear Program](#), Ashley Cooper leads initiatives to promote rainwater harvesting as a simple way residents can limit storm runoff. By making it easy and affordable to purchase a rain barrel, Ashley Cooper programs protect the waterways around Charleston from flooding, pollution, and waste. This collaboration has been very successful in raising water conservation awareness; to date, Ashley Cooper has sold and distributed over 1,200 ‘Ivy’ rain barrels.



ACTION

The mission of the Ashley Cooper Stormwater Education Consortium is to provide community awareness and support to improve water quality within the Ashley and Cooper River basins. One way they accomplish this mission is by providing educational opportunities about stormwater impacts and the community’s responsibility to support healthy, fishable, and swimmable waterways.

Starting in 2013, Ashley Cooper partnered with Rain Water Solutions to provide rain barrel distribution sales to raise awareness and community involvement. The first sale sold 162 rain barrels. Additional events have been held each year with progressively successful results. Now in their fourth year, Ashley Cooper’s awareness campaign has sold over 355 ‘Ivy’ rain barrels in 2016.

[Rain Water Solutions](#) provides Ashley Cooper with a streamlined, customized approach for sales, rebates, and distribution. Program organizers receive marketing tools, a dedicated customer website, and the event support they need to overcome obstacles and meet objectives. Residents learn about the benefits of water harvesting and use a secure e-commerce site to order ‘Ivy’ rain barrels at a price significantly less than retail. Residents picked up their purchase at one of the many rain barrel distribution events held throughout the area.

RESULTS

- Residents of the Ashley Cooper river basin have purchased 1,200+ ‘Ivy’ 50-gallon rain barrels.
- Ashley Cooper’s programs help MS4s, counties, and cities receive Low Impact Development (L.I.D.) outreach and permit credits.

*“Delighted with the ease of assembly.
Its working out great!”*
— Ashley Cooper Resident

*“We use it to for yard care and
water for our chickens.”*
— Ashley Cooper Resident

In surveys of Ashley Cooper Residents/Customers	
■	70% were using their ‘Ivy’ rain barrel
■	99% bought to conserve/reuse water for outdoor plants
■	77% were likely to use their rain barrel regularly
■	100% were satisfied with the ordering & distribution process
■	83% would purchase additional rain barrels

“The rain barrel program has been a great tool for Clemson Extension to work towards our goal of a regional, watershed-scale stormwater runoff education strategy in the Charleston area. ‘Iv’y rain barrels are very user friendly and make rainwater harvesting easy and simple. Water quality effects all of us.”

Kim Counts Morganello - Water Resources Agent, Carolina Clear/Clemson University Cooperative Extension Service

Learn more about Rain Water Solutions and how to start a rain barrel distribution program at rainwatersolutions.com.